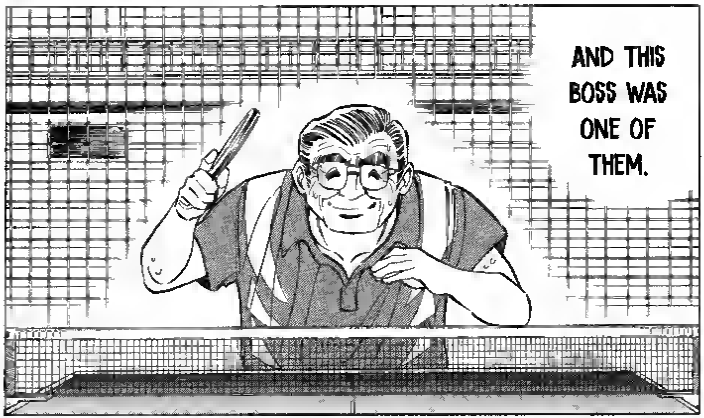
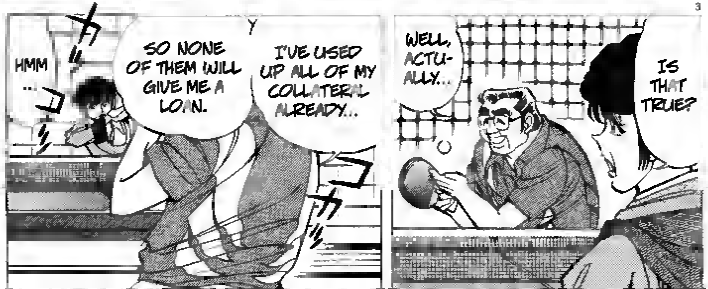
PING-PONG BOSS
Chapter 3
Doubles Duel of Trust
GOOD EVENING!
SURE IS GETTING COLD OUT, ISN'T IT!?
OH!?
AHH, MS. TOMO!

OH, THERE YOU GO AGAIN, BOSS...!
ALRIGHT, BOSS! TODAY I'LL FINALLY HAVE YOU ON YOUR KNEES!
OH, NO, I REALLY CAN'T HOLD A CANDLE TO YOU, MS. TOMO..!
ON MONDAYS AND THURSDAYS AT 6:00 PM...
AND EACH OF THEM HAVE THEIR OWN STORIES TO TELL.
MANY PING-PONG PLAYERS OF ALL AGES, GENDERS, AND SKILL LEVELS, GATHER HERE AT THE CIVIC GYMNASIUM TO HIT A PLASTIC WHITE BALL.
2
THESE TYPES WERE QUITE COMMON-PLACE.
A MAN WHO WOULDN'T CUT BACK ON PING-PONG, EVEN ON HIS DOCTOR'S ORDERS..
A MAN WHO COULDN'T QUIT PING-PONG EVEN THOUGH HIS WIFE LEFT HIM AND HE THREW HIS LIFE AWAY..


AND THIS BOSS WAS ONE OF THEM.

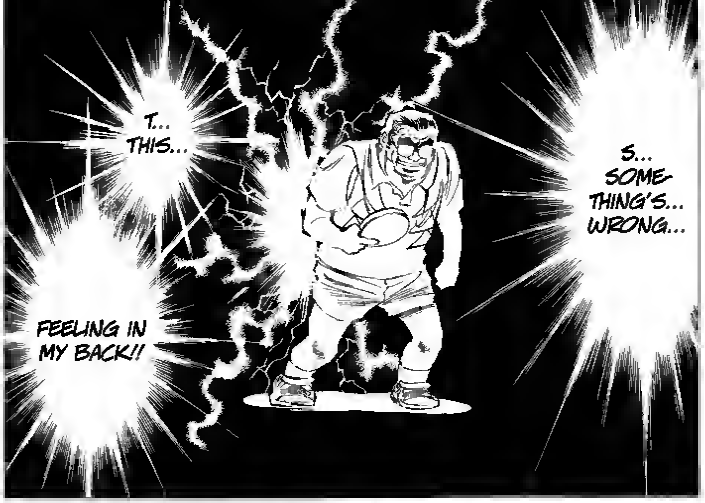
BOSS, ARE YOU NOT FEELING WELL TODAY...?
OH, NO, I'M FINE.
AHH ...!

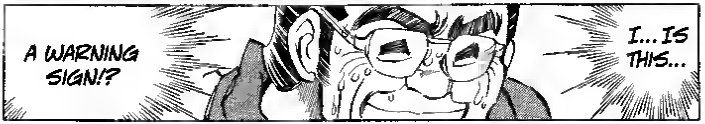
BANKS !?
HE'S BEEN AROUND TO OVER TWENTY BANKS AL READY!
I THINK MR. MIZUSHIMA CAN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT HIS NEW VENTURE.


HMM ...
SO NONE OF THEM WILL GIVE ME A LOAN.
I'VE USED UP ALL OF MY COLLATERAL ALREADY...
WELL, ACTU-ALLY...
IS THAT TRUE?

AND THERE WAS ONE PLACE THAT SAID "WE'LL GIVE YOU A LOAN" AT FIRST,
SO I PAID THE FIVE MILLION YEN FRANCHISE FEE...
AND THEN THEY SAID, "NO, WE CAN'T GIVE YOU A LOAN, AFTER ALL"...
HEY, BOSS, YOU'RE MOVING PRETTY CHOPPY, YOU KNOW.
WELL, THERE JUST AREN'T THAT MANY BANKS THAT'LL GIVE YOU A LOAN THAT EASILY THESE DAYS...
AND YET,
THEY BARELY GIVE YOU ANY INTEREST.
?
URK!
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
OH.. IT'S NOTHING...
4
.....

BUT THERE JUST AREN'T THAT MANY BANKS WITH HIGH INTEREST RATES...
I'M THINKING OF DEPOSITING MY MONEY AT A BANK, BECAUSE IT'S NOT DOING MUCH AT HOME..
IT REALLY IS COLD OUT THESE DAYS...!
PHEW.. I'M FINALLY FEELING WARM AGAIN!
5
.....
YOU BETTER NOT PUSH YOURSELF, OR YOU'LL HURT YOUR BACK OR YOUR KNEES!
BUT LOOK AT MR. MIZUSHIMA. HE'S BEEN PLAYING ALL DAY IN SHORT-SLEEVES AND SHORTS!
HAHA.. THAT'S JUST WHAT I ENDED UP PUTTING ON!
.....
GOTTA TREAT YOUR BODY WITH CARE!

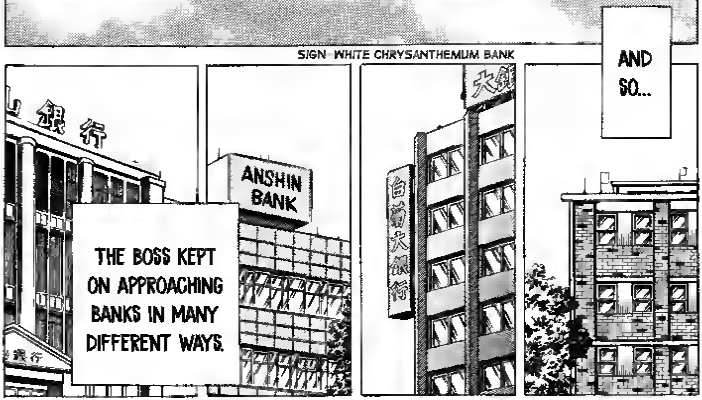

T... THIS...
S... SOME-THING'S... WRONG...
FEELING IN MY BACK!!

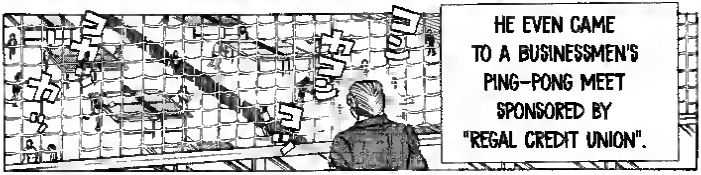

A WARNING SIGN!?
I... IS THIS...

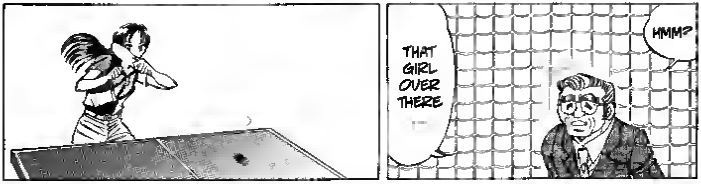
6

300 MILLION!!
I THINK IT'S ABOUT 300 MILLION.
SO, DO YOU KNOW HOW MUCH OF A LOAN HE WANTS FROM THE BANK?
O... OH, NOTHING. BUT I THINK I'D BETTER CALL IT A DAY.
WHAT'S THE MATTER, BOSS?

SIGN: WHITE CHRYSANTHEMUM BANK







THAT WAS WHEN THE DIRECTOR OF REGAL CREDIT UNION SPOKE TO HIM.
GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN, SIR.
WE'VE JUST APPOINTED A NEW BRANCH MANAGER, SO I WANTED TO INTRODUCE YOU...

THE BOSS HAD ONCE OPENED A TIME-DEPOSIT ACCOUNT AT HER REQUEST.
NO, NO.
I SEEM TO RECALL THAT YOU HELPED HER ONCE IN THE PAST...
...OH, THAT GIRL?
I PLAYED MISS AKIYAMA ONCE, BUT I DIDN'T STAND A CHANCE.
SHE'S THE ACE OF ALL OUR BUSINESSMEN...
WELL, SHE'S VERY GOOD.
WELL, I'M STILL AN ACTIVE PLAYER, BUT I'LL BET I WOULDN'T STAND A CHANCE EITHER, RIGHT...?
OH...?
...YOU'RE STILL ACTIVE!?
...BOSS...

I WOULDN'T MIND THAT AT ALL.
WELL...
INTERESTING... WHY DON'T WE HAVE A GAME SOMETIME!?
NO, NO! HAHHAHHA!!
AGAINST HER!
...I'LL BET YOU'RE THINKING YOU CAN PUT UP A GOOD FIGHT!
NO, NO, OF COURSE NOT! HAHHAHHAHHA...
YOU'RE NOT THINKING "MAYBE I'D EVEN WIN", ARE YOU?
HE'S DEFINITELY THINKING IT!! HMM.. HE CLEARLY DOESN'T KNOW HIS PLACE!!
HE'S THINKING IT!!

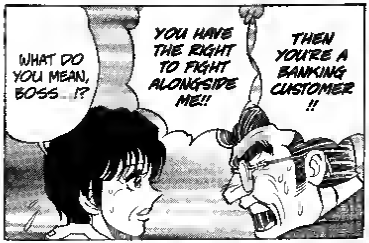
IS HE EVEN TAKING ME LIGHTLY!?
AND THIS IS AFTER I SAID "I DIDN'T STAND A CHANCE"...
NOT SO GOOD AT DOUBLES, ARE YOU..?
C... CO-ED DOUBLES!?
BUT IT'LL BE A DOUBLES GAME! I'LL PARTNER UP WITH MISS AKIYAMA!!
WELL, SOUNDS FUN! I'LL SET THIS UP! LET'S DO IT!!
WELL, IT'S JUST THAT I HAVEN'T PLAYED DOUBLES VERY OFTEN..
OH, YOU'RE JOKING!
HOW ABOUT IT?
IF YOU WIN, WE'LL DO ANYTHING YOU ASK!
IF..
N-NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME..

WILL THEY LOAN ME 300 MILLION YEN, WITH NO COLLATERAL!?
SO ...
IF I WIN, THEY'LL DO ANYTHING I ASK!?
IN THIS MOMENT, BOSS MIZUSHIMA'S THOUGHTS HAD GONE FAR PAST THE BOUNDS OF REASON.
ANY-THING!?

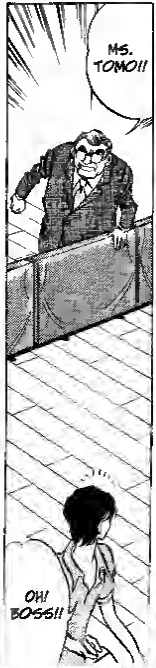
IF I WIN THIS MATCH, I'LL BRING THAT DEAL UP!!
ALRIGHT, I HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE!!
I HAVE
TO WIN THIS MATCH!!
SO, BOSS, WHO ARE YOU GOING TO PICK AS YOUR DOUBLES PARTNER...?
THAT'S THE QUES-TION
NONE OF THE LADIES IN MY COMPANY CAN HOLD A CANDLE TO THOSE TWO.
DON'T YOU ALWAYS GO TO YOUR PING-PONG MEETS AT SIX?
WHY DON'T YOU ASK SOMEONE FROM THERE?
12

THAT'S MY ONLY OPTION!!

YES, WHY?
DIDN'T YOU SAY YOU WANTED TO DEPOSIT YOUR MONEY WITH A HIGH-INTEREST BANK!?

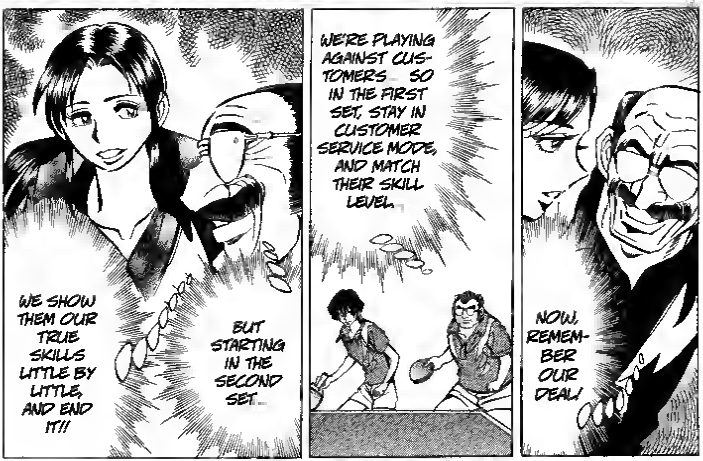

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, BOSS...!?
YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO FIGHT ALONGSIDE ME!!
THEN YOU'RE A BANKING CUSTOMER !!

DOU-BLES?

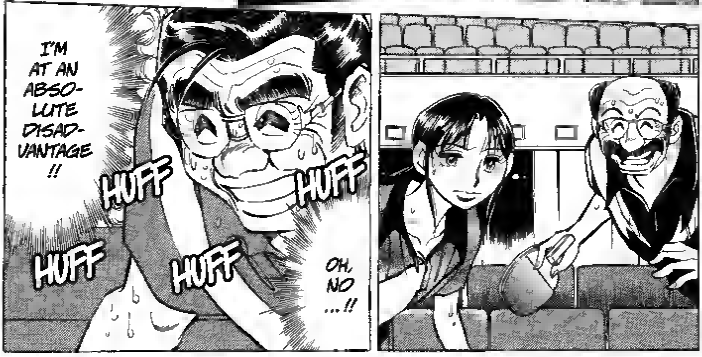

MS. TOMO!!
OH! BOSS!!

THE BANK WILL DO ANYTHING WE ASK?
IF WE WIN...
FIGHT!!
SIGN: FIGHT ON BOSS!!
14
UNTIL THIS MATCH IS OVER...
I'M COUNTING ON YOU
.....
WHY DOES HE HAVE SO MANY SUPPORTERS?

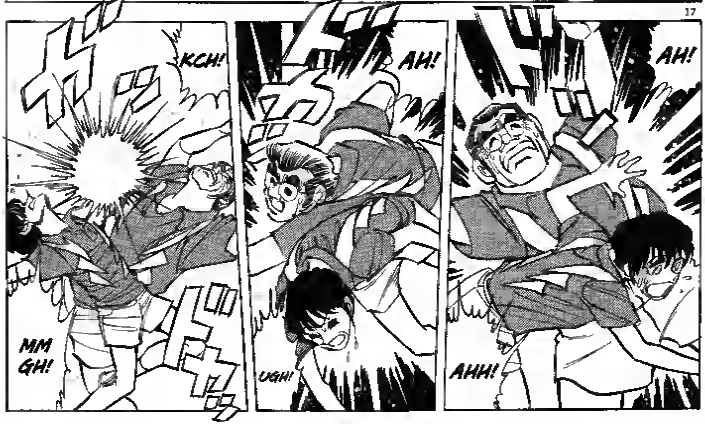
DON'T GIVE OUT ON ME, BACK!!
UNTIL THIS MATCH IS OVER,
3-SET MATCH, TO 21 POINTS
SET 1 BEGINS!


WE SHOW THEM OUR TRUE SKILLS LITTLE BY LITTLE, AND END IT!!
BUT STARTING IN THE SECOND SET...
WE'RE PLAYING AGAINST CUSTOMERS... SO IN THE FIRST SET, STAY IN CUSTOMER SERVICE MODE, AND MATCH THEIR SKILL LEVEL.
NOW, REMEMBER OUR DEAL!

BOSS
DIRECTOR
0 00 1
URK!
KCH.
3 00 5
0 00 2
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
7 00 10


I'M AT AN ABSO-LUTE DISAD-VANTAGE !!
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
OH, NO ...!!

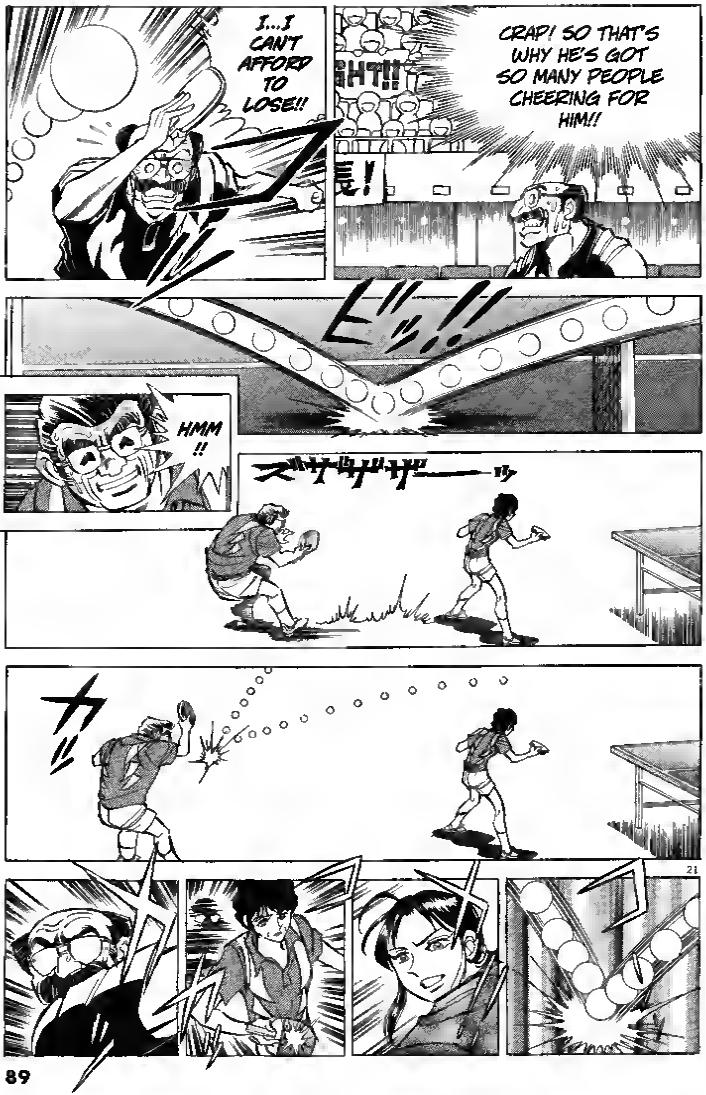
AND IN A DOUBLES GAME WITH TWO RIGHT-HANDED PARTNERS, WE KEEP GETTING IN EACH OTHER'S WAY...!
BUT WE'RE BOTH RIGHT-HANDED!!
AS IF THAT GIRL WASN'T STRONG ENOUGH AS IT IS, SHE'S IN THE SOUTHPAW POSITION...
STEP ASIDE
STEP ASIDE
HARD TO STEP ASIDE
STEP ASIDE
STEP ASIDE
MOVE IN
MOVE IN
HARD TO MOVE IN
MOVE IN
MOVE IN


17
KCH!
AH!
AH!
MM GH!
UGH!
AHH!

19 00 21
FIRST SET GOES TO THE DIRECTOR!! CHANGE COURTS!!
18
I-IT'S HOPE LESS...
IS THIS AS FAR AS I CAN GET WITH A PARTNER I'VE NEVER PLAYED WITH BEFORE...!?
I'M MAKING SO MANY UNNECESSARY MOVES, IT'S GETTING TO MY BACK...
WE CAN DO THIS, MR. MIZUSHIMA!
WE'RE JUST GETTING STARTED!!
Y-YEAH
AREN'T THEY GOING TO LEND YOU 300 MILLION YEN WITH NO COLLATERAL IF WE WIN!?
R. RIGHT

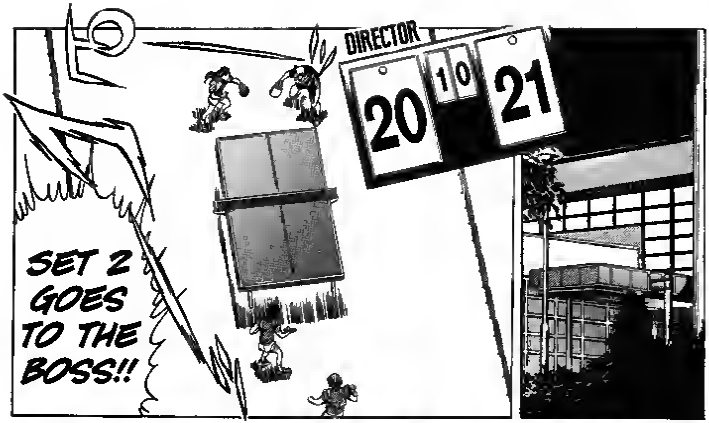
ヒィ
ヒィ
WHAT!? IF THEY WIN...
IF THEY WIN, THEY'LL BORROW 300 MILLION YEN WITH NO COLLATERAL...!?
N... NO WAY!!
I NEVER AGREED TO THAT!! SO WHY...!?
IF YOU WIN... WE'LL DO ANYTHING YOU ASK!
AHH !!
.....

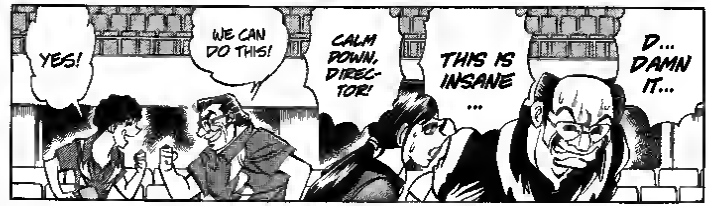
HE CAN'T MAKE THAT OUTRAGEOUS REQUEST OVER THIS LITTLE GAME... WHAT IS HE THINKING!?
Y...YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING ME...
YOU CAN USE YOUR FULL POWER!!
WE'RE GOING TO END IT THIS SET...!
YES, SIR!
SO I'D BETTER GET THIS OVER WITH BEFORE IT COMES AROUND TO BITE ME...!!
B...BUT I GUESS I HAVE TO HONOR MY WORD...
MISS AKIYAMA!!
FIGHT
PLAY !!
SET 2 BEGINS!!


I...I CAN'T AFFORD TO LOSE!!
CRAP! SO THAT'S WHY HE'S GOT SO MANY PEOPLE CHEERING FOR HIM!!
HMM !!
21

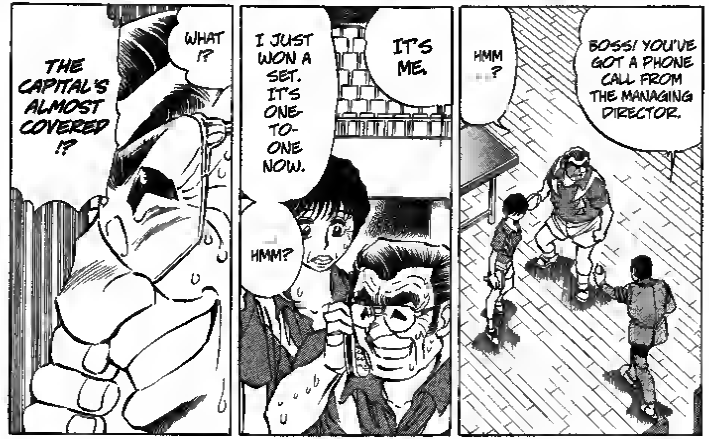
HE'S STARTED PLAYING A LOT HARDER ALL OF A SUDDEN...
WHAT'S GOING ON?
KCC CH!
IF HE KEEPS PLAYING THIS WAY, I CAN PULL BACK FROM THE TABLE...
BUT THIS IS A LOT EASIER TO HANDLE!
THAT GETS RID OF OUR TWO RIGHT-HANDED PARTNERS PROBLEM!!
22
!!
AND IT'S LESS OF A STRAIN ON MY BACK!!

I CAN MOVE FREELY... AND I FEEL LIKE SOMEONE HAS MY BACK..!!
I WONDER WHY... IT'S SUDDENLY GOTTEN A LOT EASIER.
NOW...
AHH!!
23
O-OH, NO...!!
I CAN USE MY BEST SHOTS!!


DIRECTOR
20
10
21
SET 2 GOES TO THE BOSS!!

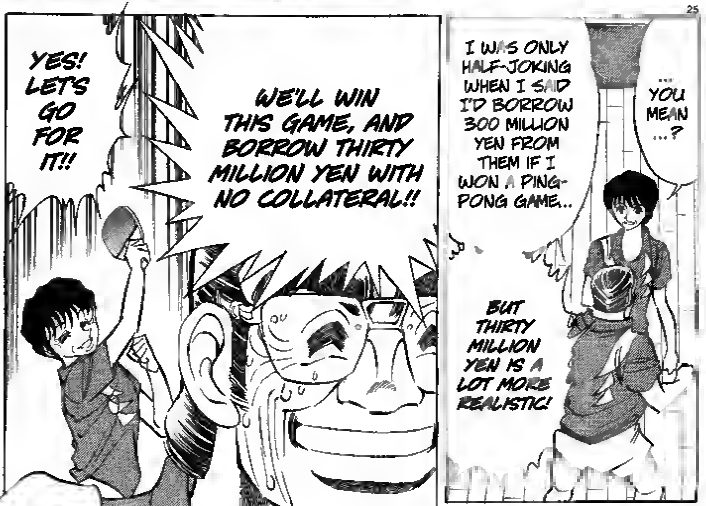

YES!
WE CAN DO THIS!
CALM DOWN, DIRECTOR!
THIS IS INSANE ...
D... DAMN IT...

24

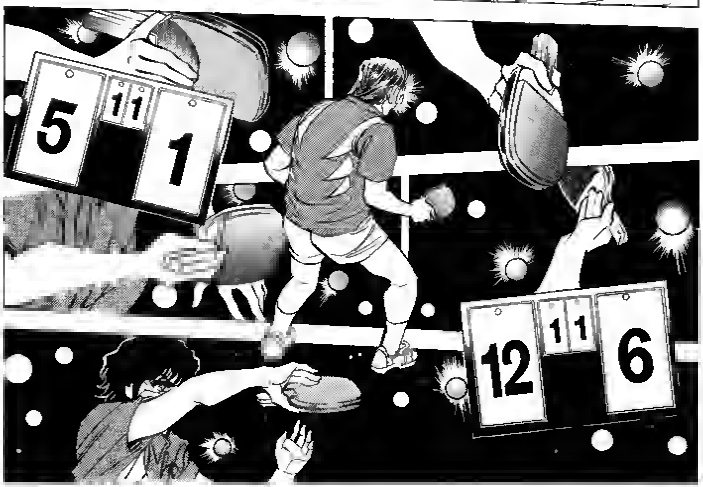

THE CAPITAL'S ALMOST COVERED !?
WHAT !?
I JUST WON A SET. IT'S ONE-TO-ONE NOW.
HMM?
IT'S ME.
HMM ...?
BOSS! YOU'VE GOT A PHONE CALL FROM THE MANAGING DIRECTOR.

UH-HUH... THE DISTRIBUTOR... AH, OKAY...
AND ALL WE NEED IS THE WORKING CAPITAL..?
GOOD!!
WHO...!? WHO'S LENDING IT TO US..?

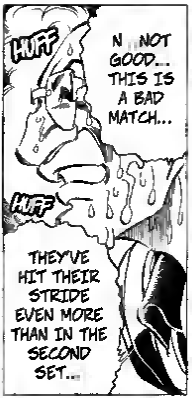
I JUST NEED THIRTY MILLION NOW!
I WON'T HAVE TO BEG THEM FOR 300 MILLION YEN IF WE WIN THIS GAME!!
WHAT IS IT, BOSS?

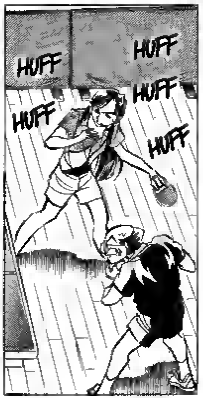

YES! LET'S GO FOR IT!!
WE'LL WIN THIS GAME, AND BORROW THIRTY MILLION YEN WITH NO COLLATERAL!!
I WAS ONLY HALF-JOKING WHEN I SAID I'D BORROW 300 MILLION YEN FROM THEM IF I WON A PING-PONG GAME..
BUT THIRTY MILLION YEN IS A LOT MORE REALISTIC!
...YOU MEAN...?

BOSS
DIRECTOR
1
11
0
SET 3 BEGINS!!


5
11
1
12
11
6

MY ONLY CONCERN NOW... IS THAT MY... BACK... MAKES IT TO THE END...!!
THIS IS GOING WELL... I CAN DO THIS...!!


HUFF
N NOT GOOD... THIS IS A BAD MATCH...
HUFF
THEY'VE HIT THEIR STRIDE EVEN MORE THAN IN THE SECOND SET...

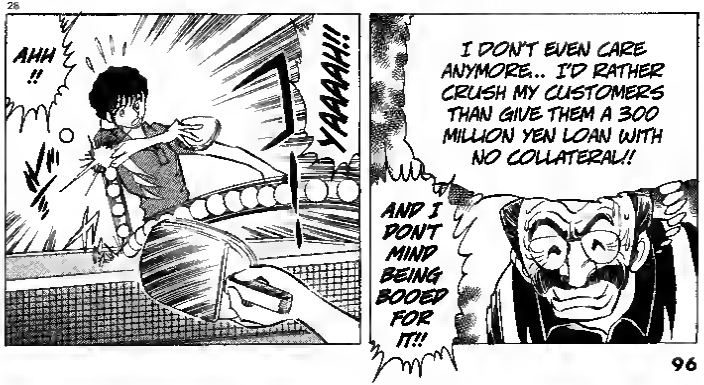

HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF

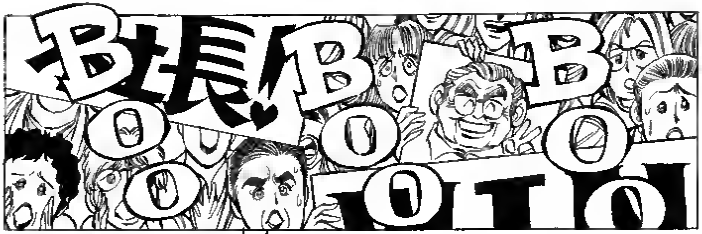
BUT THE BOSS CAN'T HIT THE BALL IF IT DOESN'T GO ALL THE WAY TO THE BACK...!!
SO WHAT DO WE DO!?
YES, SIR!
MISS AKIYAMA... OUR OPPONENTS' POSITIONING IS PRETTY SOLID FOR BEING IMPROVISED!
?
?
コショ
コショ
コショ
ピ
PLAY !!
27
AHH!
NOW! HIT IT!!
DON'T LET THE BOSS GET IT!!

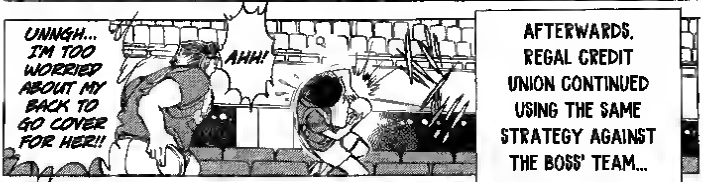
BOSS
DIRECTOR
12
11
7
FIGHT!
燃え3社
成
社
利!
心
12—7!!

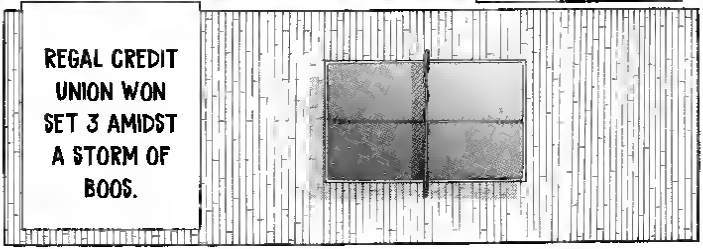
!!
AHH!

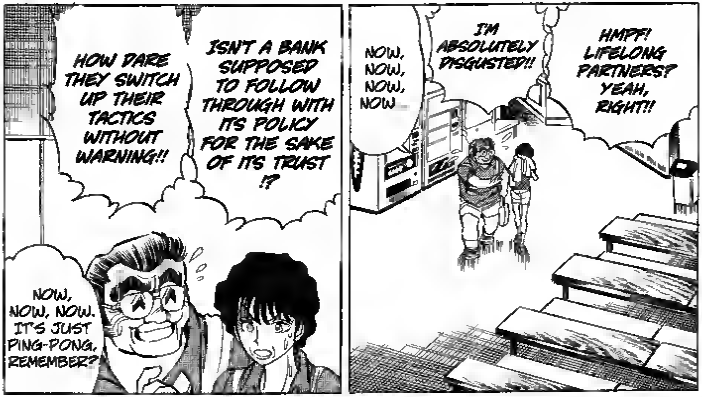
BOO
BOO
BOO
FIGHT!
燃え
以上


AHH!!
YAAAAH!!!
I DON'T EVEN CARE ANYMORE... I'D RATHER CRUSH MY CUSTOMERS THAN GIVE THEM A 300 MILLION YEN LOAN WITH NO COLLATERAL!!
AND I DON'T MIND BEING BOOED FOR IT!!

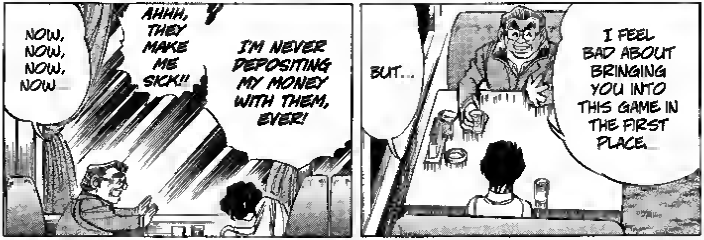

BOO BOO BOO


UNNGH... I'M TOO WORRIED ABOUT MY BACK TO GO COVER FOR HER!!
AHH!
AFTERWARDS, REGAL CREDIT UNION CONTINUED USING THE SAME STRATEGY AGAINST THE BOSS' TEAM...

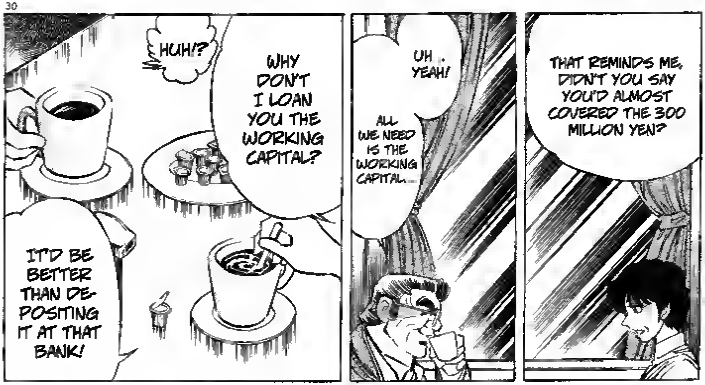

REGAL CREDIT UNION WON SET 3 AMIDST A STORM OF BOOS.


HOW DARE THEY SWITCH UP THEIR TACTICS WITHOUT WARNING!!
ISN'T A BANK SUPPOSED TO FOLLOW THROUGH WITH ITS POLICY FOR THE SAKE OF ITS TRUST !?
NOW, NOW, NOW. IT'S JUST PING-PONG, REMEMBER?
NOW, NOW, NOW, NOW...
I'M ABSOLUTELY DISGUSTED!!
HMPF! LIFELONG PARTNERS? YEAH, RIGHT!!

Rival Host
Rival Host
PARK
NO, NO...
AND JUST WHEN THEY WERE ABOUT TO LEND YOU THE MONEY...
I'M SO SORRY... I FEEL LIKE YOU LOST BECAUSE OF ME.


NOW, NOW, NOW, NOW...
AHHH, THEY MAKE ME SICK!!
I'M NEVER DEPOSITING MY MONEY WITH THEM, EVER!
BUT...
I FEEL BAD ABOUT BRINGING YOU INTO THIS GAME IN THE FIRST PLACE...

30


HUH!?
WHY DON'T I LOAN YOU THE WORKING CAPITAL?
IT'D BE BETTER THAN DEPOSITING IT AT THAT BANK!
UH, YEAH!
ALL WE NEED IS THE WORKING CAPITAL...
THAT REMINDS ME, DIDN'T YOU SAY YOU'D ALMOST COVERED THE 300 MILLION YEN?

W... WELL, OF COURSE !!
WILL YOU AT LEAST GIVE ME AN INTEREST RATE BETTER THAN THE BANK'S?
HERE, WRITE "TRUST" ON THIS PIECE OF PAPER.
OH, FORGET ABOUT THE COLLATERAL! IN RETURN,
B...BUT I DON'T HAVE COLLATERAL ...
TRUST
OK !!
WE HAVE A DEAL!!
THE BOSS' NEW VENTURE WAS FINALLY UNDERWAY.
AND SO,

OH, REALLY!? THANK GOOD-NESS!
HEY! I GOT THE LAST THIRTY MILLION COVERED!!
I DID IT! I DID IT!
I DID IT! I DID IT!
THANK GOOD-NESS FOR THAT!
OKAY!
THE BATH'S READY, BY THE WAY!
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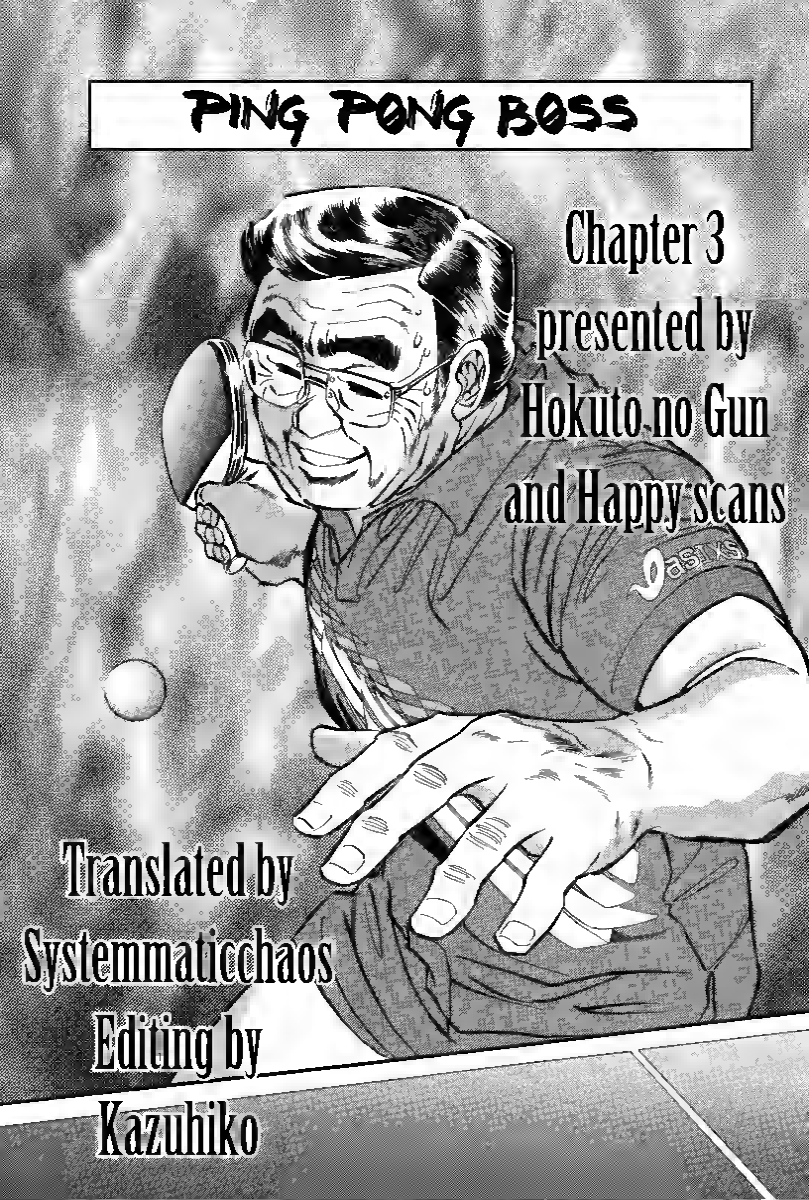
HONEY!
WHAT'S WRONG?
OHH?
HUH?
AND SO...
BUT HE SLEPT WITH A TRANQUIL LOOK ON HIS FACE...
THE BOSS SUDDENLY KEELED OVER IN THE BATHTUB, AND WAS TAKEN TO THE HOSPITAL BY AN AMBULANCE. HE WAS DIAGNOSED WITH A HERNIATED DISK AND HOSPITALIZED...

PING PONG BOSS



Chapter 3
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